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Course Introduction and Expectations

U.S. History ACP

2011-2012

Course Description:

Welcome to U.S. History ACP. In this challenging and exciting course, we will begin our study of American history with a thorough examination of the United States Constitution. In order to understand much of American history, it is extremely important to have a deep knowledge of the foundations of the American government. After a careful review of the Constitution, we will explore the following: Reconstruction, the Gilded Age, the Progressive Era, the Emergence of the United States as a World Power, World War I, the 1920s, the Great Depression and the New Deal, World War II, the Cold War, and the Civil Rights movement.

Within each unit that we study, we will analyze events using an historical perspective by looking not only at the majority, but we will take time out to listen to, observe, and reflect on stories from marginalized perspectives.

Essential Questions for the year:

Throughout this year we will continually turn to the following essential questions and try to formulate thoughtful and provocative answers based on the knowledge gained through our various units of study:

- How have Americans redefined “We the People” over time?
- To what extent has the federal government expanded to protect individual rights?
- To what extent was U.S. foreign policy a result of idealism or national interest?

Respect & Class Citizenship:

Though I am the teacher in the classroom, I am not the only one that you can learn from. Each student in this class has valuable opinions, ideas, and knowledge to contribute. It is extremely important that you respect your classmates. This does not mean that you have to agree with all that is shared, but it does mean that as a member of this class you have the responsibility to respectfully disagree. Every member of this class should feel comfortable expressing his/her opinions, asking questions, and sharing ideas.

Completing Homework Assignments:

Aside from reading and note taking, you will be assigned various tasks to complete for homework. Some homework will be collected and graded for accuracy and completeness, while others will be scanned for effort and completeness. Class discussions revolve around topics that directly relate to homework assignments, thus it is important to read the text thoroughly. You should be able to hold insightful conversations about the text and be an active participant in classroom discussions. Many of the primary and secondary sources that are assigned are challenging and require students to put in their full effort in order to understand the meaning.

You are expected to have your assignment in hand and ready to go at the beginning of class on the due date. Late assignments will be accepted for half-credit the next class period. It is your responsibility to show me the late assignment. If you have an unexcused absence or a cut you will receive no credit for your assignment (see student handbook).

Large Assignments:

Larger assignments like, papers and projects, will be scheduled in advance so that students have a reasonable length of time to complete the assignment. I suggest that students always keep a copy of their work whether it is a hard or electronic copy. There will be no extension on papers and projects except in major emergencies. Unexcused late papers and projects will be accepted for only one day after the due date and will receive no higher than a 70. If you have an unexcused absences or a cut you will receive no credit for your assignment (see student handbook).

Junior Thesis:

Juniors are required to complete a Junior Thesis Project. This is the culminating project of the skills acquired throughout your coursework in the Social Studies Department at WHS. The thesis will be broken down into various steps and pieced together. You will be receiving more detailed instruction on both the process and final product.

Attendance and Make-up Work:

Come to class! In order for you to get the most out of class it is extremely important that you are in class participating in discussions, debates, and cooperative exercises. Daily attendance will be taken and the school policy on attendance will be followed.

Be on time! You'd be amazed at how much information can be packed into a five-minute period. It is distracting to your classmates and to me when students come to class late. The school policy on tardies will also be enforced.

You are responsible for your make up work—homework, in class notes, and exams. In order to receive credit for your work, I must receive, or it becomes a zero.

If you are attending a field trip be sure to get the assignments you will be missing and hand in the assignments that are due before you leave on the field trip.

Please review the school's policy on absences (field trips included) and make up work in the student handbook.

Extra Help:

It is my goal to help each student achieve his/her very best in this course. I am more than willing to assist you with any aspect of this course and will do my best to ensure your success if you put forth your best effort. Please feel free to talk to me if you have questions, concerns, or problems. I am often available before and after school, but please make an appointment with me to ensure I am around when you come for help. Remember: the Social Studies lab is a resource that can be used for assistance when writing papers, before a test, or on homework. Check the schedule for assigned periods.

Grade Breakdown:

Class Citizenship (see attached for breakdown)	10%
Assessments (tests, in-class essays, quizzes, large projects)	65%
Term Assignments (homework, in-class group work, small projects)	25%

Class Citizenship Expectations & Self Evaluation

Name: _____

Quarter: _____

Class Citizenship is an important component of your quarter grade in this class. My expectations for you are outlined below. Please consider your performance over the term and evaluate yourself.

Expectations:	Always	Mostly	Some-times	Rarely
You are prepared for class when it begins. You are seated, notebook is open, ready to listen. (You are not in the hall, in the bathroom, getting a drink, tissue, etc...)				
You have all relevant materials in hand ready to work.				
You volunteer in classroom discussions.				
You refrain from being disruptive, interrupting, and making rude comments.				
You respect the rights of others to speak.				
You work on-task during in class assignments.				
You fulfill your portion of in class assignments.				
You refrain from leaving class excessively.				
You are responsible for your absences (reschedule tests and quizzes, show me make up work, get notes, etc...)				

After you have self-evaluated your in class performance I want you to consider what you think your class citizenship grade should be. Provide a letter grade and a brief explanation of why you deserve this grade. I will consider your thoughts when determining your class citizenship grade.

I would give myself a(n) _____ in this class because: